



City of Huntington Beach Planning and Building Department

STAFF REPORT

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Scott Hess, AICP, Director of Planning and Building
BY: Hayden Beckman, Planning Aide *HB*
DATE: April 24, 2012

SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 12-01 (EDINGER AVENUE UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT)

APPLICANT: Public Works Dept., City of Huntington Beach, 2000 Main Street, Huntington Beach, CA 92648

PROPERTY

OWNER: City of Huntington Beach, 2000 Main Street, Huntington Beach, CA 92648

LOCATION: Edinger Avenue (between Marjan Lane and Gothard Street)

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

- ♦ General Plan Conformance No. 12-01 request:
 - To determine if a proposed underground utility district on Edinger Avenue, between Marjan Lane and Gothard Street is in conformance with the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan.
- ♦ Staff's Recommendation: Approve General Plan Conformance No. 12-01 based upon the following:
 - The proposed underground utility district conforms to the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

Motion to:

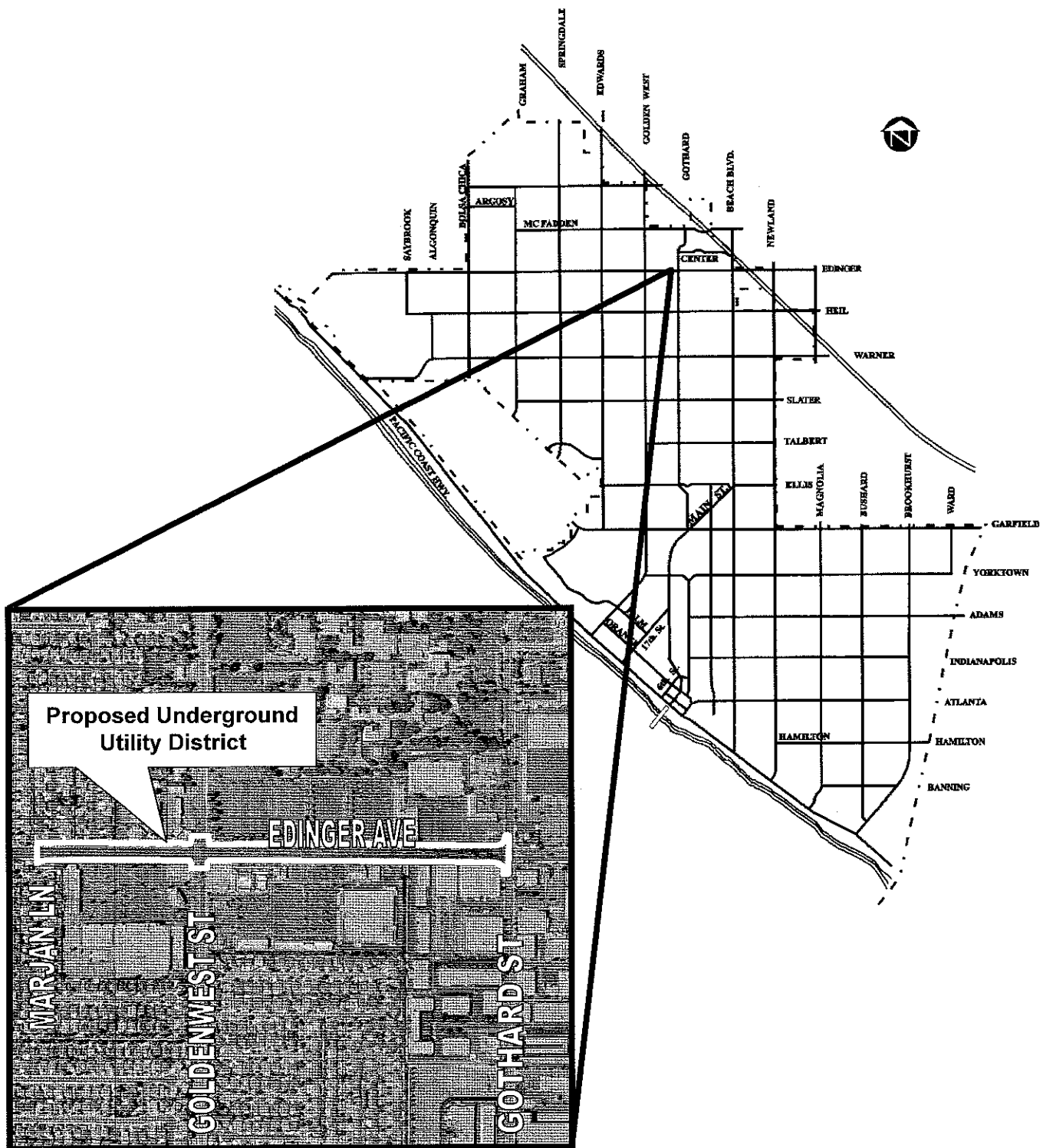
“Adopt Resolution No. 1661, approving General Plan Conformance No. 12-01 with findings (Attachment Nos. 1 and 2).”

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

The Planning Commission may take an alternative action such as:

A. “Deny General Plan Conformance No. 12-01 with findings for denial.”

B. “Continue General Plan Conformance No. 12-01 and direct staff accordingly.”



VICINITY MAP
GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 12-01
(EDINGER AVENUE UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT)

PROJECT PROPOSAL:

General Plan Conformance No.12-01 represents a request, pursuant to Section 65402 of the California Government Code, by the City of Huntington Beach Public Works Department to determine if a proposed underground utility district on Edinger Avenue, between Marjan Lane and Gothard Street, is in conformance with the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan. The proposed district also includes the Right of Way portion of the intersection of Edinger Avenue and Goldenwest Street and only encompasses the streets and sidewalks of the entire district. The proposed Underground Utility District will allow for the undergrounding of Southern California Edison power poles and associated overhead wires for Time Warner and Verizon. The Planning Commission must review the proposal for consistency with the City's General Plan prior to City Council action on the district.

The Public Works Department initiated this request due to the high level of use of Edinger Avenue and the visual and safety impacts associated with utility poles and overhead wires.

ISSUES:

Subject Property and Surrounding Land Use, Zoning and General Plan Designations:

| LOCATION – EDINGER AVENUE | GENERAL PLAN | ZONING | LAND USE |
|------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Subject Area: | ROW (Right of Way) | ROW | Existing Edinger Avenue |
| West of Subject Area: | RL-7 (Residential Low Density – 7 du/ac) | RL (Residential Low Density) | Single Family Residential |
| East of Subject Area: | M-sp-pd (Mixed Use – Specific Plan Overlay – Pedestrian Overlay) | SP14 (Beach and Edinger Corridors Specific Plan – Town Center Core and Town Center Boulevard Segments) | Commercial |
| North of Subject Area: | M-sp-pd , P(CG-F1) (Commercial General – 0.35 Max Density underlying Public) | SP14 (Town Center Boulevard Segment) & P (Public) | Commercial; Goldenwest College |
| South of Subject Area: | M-sp-pd | SP14 (Town Center Boulevard Segment) & RL | Commercial |

General Plan Conformance:

The General Plan Land Use Map designation for the subject property is public right-of-way. The proposed project is consistent with this designation and goals, objectives, and policies of the City's General Plan as follows:

A. Urban Design Element

Goal UD 1: Enhance the visual image of the City of Huntington Beach.

Policy UD 1.3.2: Provide for the implementation of streetscape improvements along the major commercial corridors, through public capital improvement programs, business district improvements, or other techniques as funding is available.

The removal of existing Southern California Edison power poles and associated overhead wires for Time Warner and Verizon along Edinger Avenue will enhance the appearance of Edinger Avenue by eliminating structures that detract from the visual image of the corridor and significant public views.

Policy UD 2.2.4: Require the undergrounding of utility lines.

B. Utilities Element

Policy U 5.1.2: Continue to underground above ground electrical transmission lines.

The Underground Utility Committee has identified Edinger Avenue, between Marjan Lane and Gothard Street as a high priority district due to the high level of use of Edinger Avenue and the visual and safety impacts associated with utility poles and overhead wires. The proposed Underground Utility District will allow for the undergrounding of Southern California Edison power poles and associated overhead wires for Time Warner and Verizon along a segment of Edinger Avenue.

Zoning Compliance: Not applicable.

Urban Design Guidelines Conformance: Not applicable.

Environmental Status:

The undergrounding of utilities is categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15302, Class 2 (d) of the California Environmental Quality Act, which states that, "Conversion of overhead electric utility distribution system facilities to underground including connection to existing overhead electric utility distribution lines where the surface is restored to the condition existing prior to the undergrounding," is exempt from any environmental review.

Coastal Status: Not applicable.

Redevelopment Status: Not applicable.

Design Review Board: Not applicable.

Subdivision Committee: Not applicable.

Other Departments Concerns and Requirements:

No concerns from other departments have been received regarding the request for General Plan Conformance.

Public Notification:

General Plan Conformances are non-public hearing items and do not require legal notification.

Application Processing Dates:

DATE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION:

April 2, 2012

MANDATORY PROCESSING DATE(S):

May 14, 2012 (40 days from complete application)

ANALYSIS:

Prior to City Council action on the district, the Planning Commission must review the proposal for consistency with the City's General Plan, pursuant to the Government Code of the State of California. Section 65402 of the Government Code provides that a local agency shall not acquire real property, nor dispose of any real property, nor construct a public building or structure in any county or city until the location, purpose, and extent of such activity has been reported upon as to conformity with the adopted General Plan.

Pursuant to Section 17.64.020 of Municipal Code Chapter 17.64 Undergrounding of Utilities, an Underground Utilities Coordinating Committee met on February 9, 2012 to advise the City Council with respect to technical aspects of the undergrounding of public utilities within the City. The Committee voted to establish the Edinger Avenue Underground Utility District by a vote of 5-0.

Existing overhead utilities along Edinger Avenue consist of Southern California Edison (SCE) power poles and cables along with Time Warner Cable and Verizon cables. The City has initiated placement of these utilities underground to reduce visual blight of the Edinger Avenue corridor and support development projects along Edinger Avenue.

The proposed Underground Utility District is consistent with the long-range plans for the project area. The designated area is a highly utilized and highly visible arterial. The proposed Underground Utility District will facilitate the elimination of visual blight, eliminate potential risks and disruptions of service caused by vehicular or storm damage to utility poles, and will enhance the appearance of Edinger Avenue.

Staff recommends approval of General Plan Conformance No. 12-01 finding the proposed establishment of the Edinger Avenue Underground Utility District in conformance with the General Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Suggested Findings of Approval – GPC No. 12-01
2. Planning Commission Resolution No. 1661
3. Project Narrative Dated January March 2, 2012
4. Utility Underground Committee Meeting Minutes dated February 9, 2012

SH:MBB:HB:kd

ATTACHMENT NO. 1

SUGGESTED FINDINGS OF APPROVAL

GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 12-01

SUGGESTED FINDINGS FOR PROJECTS EXEMPT FROM CEQA:

The Planning Commission finds that the proposed project will not have any significant effect on the environment and is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15302, Class 2 (d) of the CEQA Guidelines because, "Conversion of overhead electric utility distribution system facilities to underground including connection to existing overhead electric utility distribution lines where the surface is restored to the condition existing prior to the undergrounding," is exempt from environmental review.

SUGGESTED FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL – GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 12-01:

The General Plan Land Use Map designation for the subject property is public right-of-way. The proposed project is consistent with this designation and goals, objectives, and policies of the City's General Plan as follows:

A. Urban Design Element

Goal UD 1: Enhance the visual image of the City of Huntington Beach.

Policy UD 1.3.2: Provide for the implementation of streetscape improvements along the major commercial corridors, through public capital improvement programs, business district improvements, or other techniques as funding is available.

The removal of existing Southern California Edison power poles and associated overhead wires for Time Warner and Verizon along Edinger Avenue will enhance the appearance of Edinger Avenue by eliminating structures that detract from the visual image of the corridor and significant public views.

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B. Utilities Element

Policy U 5.1.2: Continue to underground above ground electrical transmission lines.

The Underground Utility Committee has identified Edinger Avenue, between Marjan Lane and Gothard Street as a high priority district due to the high level of use of Edinger Avenue and the visual and safety impacts associated with utility poles and overhead wires. The proposed Underground Utility District will allow for the undergrounding of Southern California Edison power poles and associated overhead wires for Time Warner and Verizon along a segment of Edinger Avenue.

RESOLUTION NO. 1661

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH FINDING THE PROPOSED EDINGER AVENUE
UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE GOALS,
OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES OF THE GENERAL PLAN
(GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 12-01)**

WHEREAS, the Government Code of the State of California, Section 65402, provides that a local agency shall not acquire real property, nor dispose of any real property, nor construct a public building or structure in any county or city until the location, purpose, and extent of such activity has been reported upon as to conformity with the adopted General Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Public Works Department has submitted a request for General Plan Conformance review of the proposed establishment of an Underground Utility District on Edinger Avenue between Marjan Lane and Gothard Street; and

WHEREAS, staff has reviewed a description of the Underground Utility District and submitted it to the Planning Commission for review on April 24, 2012; and

WHEREAS, staff has indicated applicable General Plan goals, objectives, and policies to establish conformance with the General Plan (Exhibit A).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Planning Commission of the City of Huntington Beach finds the proposed Edinger Avenue Underground Utility District for the purpose of undergrounding Southern California Edison power poles and associated overhead wires for Time Warner and Verizon in conformance with the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the City of Huntington Beach at a regular meeting held on the 24th day of April, 2012 by the following roll call vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

ATTEST:

Scott Hess, Secretary

Planning Commission Chairperson

EXHIBIT A

GENERAL PLAN GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES FOR EDINGER AVENUE UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT (GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 12-01)

The establishment of the Edinger Avenue Underground Utility District conforms to the following goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan:

A. Urban Design Element

Goal UD 1: Enhance the visual image of the City of Huntington Beach.

Policy UD 1.3.2: Provide for the implementation of streetscape improvements along the major commercial corridors, through public capital improvement programs, business district improvements, or other techniques as funding is available.

The removal of existing Southern California Edison power poles and associated overhead wires for Time Warner and Verizon along Edinger Avenue will enhance the appearance of Edinger Avenue by eliminating structures that detract from the visual image of the corridor and significant public views.

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**PROPOSED UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT
EDINGER AVENUE (GOTHARD STREET TO MARJAN LANE)**

Project Narrative

In early 2012, the Public Works Department initiated the process of having the overhead utilities along Edinger Avenue (Gothard Street to Marjan Lane) placed underground. In accordance with Huntington Beach Municipal Code, Chapter 17.64.020, the Underground Utilities Committee met on February 9, 2012 and identified this project to be recommended to City Council.

In furtherance of this Code, Planning Commission review is required prior to submitting a proposal to create an Underground Utility District to City Council. Attached to this Narrative are the Meeting Minutes and excerpts of the City's General Plan, which support this project.

For reference, the City's last Utility Underground District was formed in 2010, wherein the Planning Commission approved General Plan Conformance No. 09-006 for the undergrounding of utilities along Newland Street.

CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH
UTILITY UNDERGROUND COMMITTEE MEETING
February 9, 2012
9:30 a.m.
Public Works Conference Room
2000 Main Street, 1st Floor

MEETING MINUTES

Committee Chairman Hopkins opened the meeting at approximately 9:30 a.m.

Self introductions took place including:

Committee Members: Travis Hopkins, Director of Public Works, Committee Chairman
Bob Hall, Assistant City Administrator
Herb Fauland, acting on behalf of Scott Hess, Director of Planning
Janelle Godges, SCE
Ray Roundtree, Verizon

City Staff: Tony Olmos, City Engineer
Todd Broussard, Principal Civil Engineer
Jim Wagner, Senior Civil Engineer

Others Present: Todd Pearce, SCE
Mike Murray, Verizon
Jim Scott, TW Cable

Travis Hopkins opened the meeting and gave a brief overview of the Utility Underground Committee and its role.

Tony Olmos presented the staff report giving the history of the Edinger Avenue Project and explained the Public Utility Commission (PUC) Rule 20A and/or Rule 40 findings necessary to establish that undergrounding is in the general public interest (one or more needs to be met):

- Location has an unusually heavy concentration of overhead facilities.
- Location is heavily traveled.
- Overhead equipment must be located within or pass through a civic, recreational or scenic area.
- Location qualifies as an arterial or major collector road in a local government's general plan.

Mr. Olmos showed photographs and other supporting documents from the City's General Plan and concluded that the proposed underground district on Edinger Avenue from Gothard Street to Marjan Lane (just west of Goldenwest St.) met more than one of said criteria and recommended that the Committee approve the proposed underground district and forward the recommendation to the City Council.

Herb Fauland also added that General Plan Policy U5.1.2 further justifies this recommendation.

The table was then open for discussion with the pertinent points following:

Todd Pearce, SCE gave an over view of their facilities and potential challenges concerning obtaining certain private property easements. He indicated that based on SCE's current backlog, construction would not be anticipated until 2016 and that a work order would not likely be placed for design until 2013. An 18 month design schedule is anticipated for this project with a 2 to 3 month construction schedule.

Ray Roundtree, Verizon, followed suit and mentioned same requirement to obtain similar easements. He also questioned the project boundary description as whether Verizon's boundary was measured from centerline or not. A clarification would be sought from Verizon. Based on this discussion, the proposed boundary exhibit was reviewed as being measured from the roadway Right-of-Way. The City will pursue this boundary unless otherwise notified by the respective Utility Companies.

Jim Scott, TW Cable, also acknowledged their limited facilities and associated need for at least one easement.

Bob Hall made a motion (Seconded by Herb Fauland) to; Recommend to City Council, the formation of the Edinger Avenue (Gothard to Marjan) Utility Underground District.

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0
Next steps were discussed, including:

Obtain General Plan Conformance through the Planning Commission
Obtain Resolution to Establish the Edinger Avenue Underground Utility District through the City Council

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:30 a.m.

Attachments;

Photographs
Project Boundary Description
Excerpts from General Plan
Figure CE-1
Figure CE-12
Figure UD-3
Figure Ce-9
Policy U 5.1.2

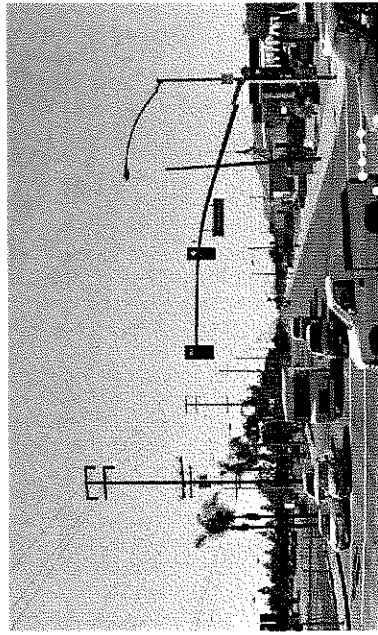


Edinger Avenue Utility Underground Project

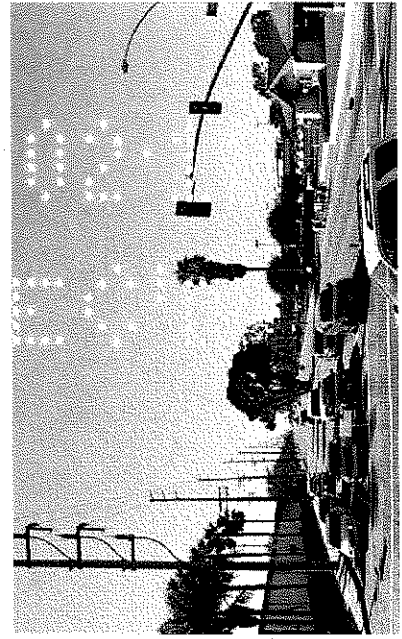
- Utility Pole



Edinger @ 500' West of Goldenwest



Edinger @ Goldenwest



Edinger @ Gothard

Edinger Avenue Utility Underground District

Project Area Description:

The full width Right-of-Way of Edinger Avenue, from Gothard Street to Marjan Lane, inclusive of the radii prolongation of the aforementioned streets and Goldenwest Street, as shown on the Exhibit "A".

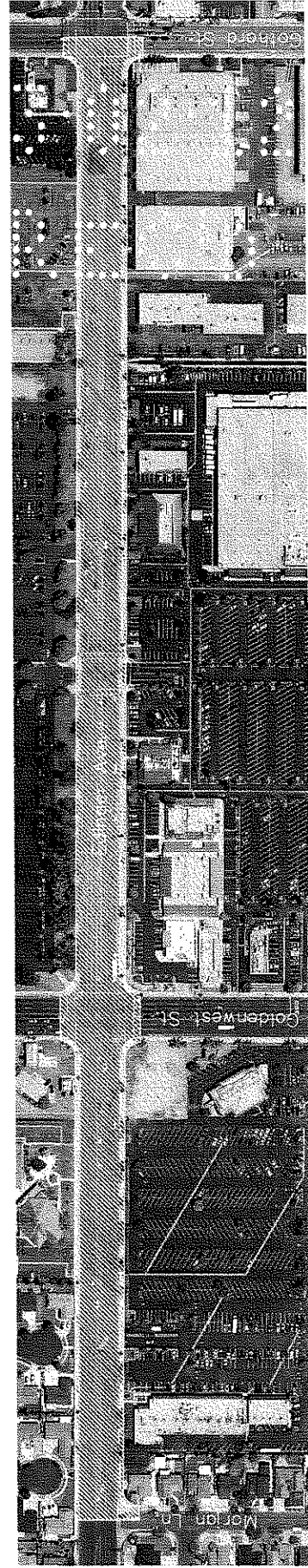
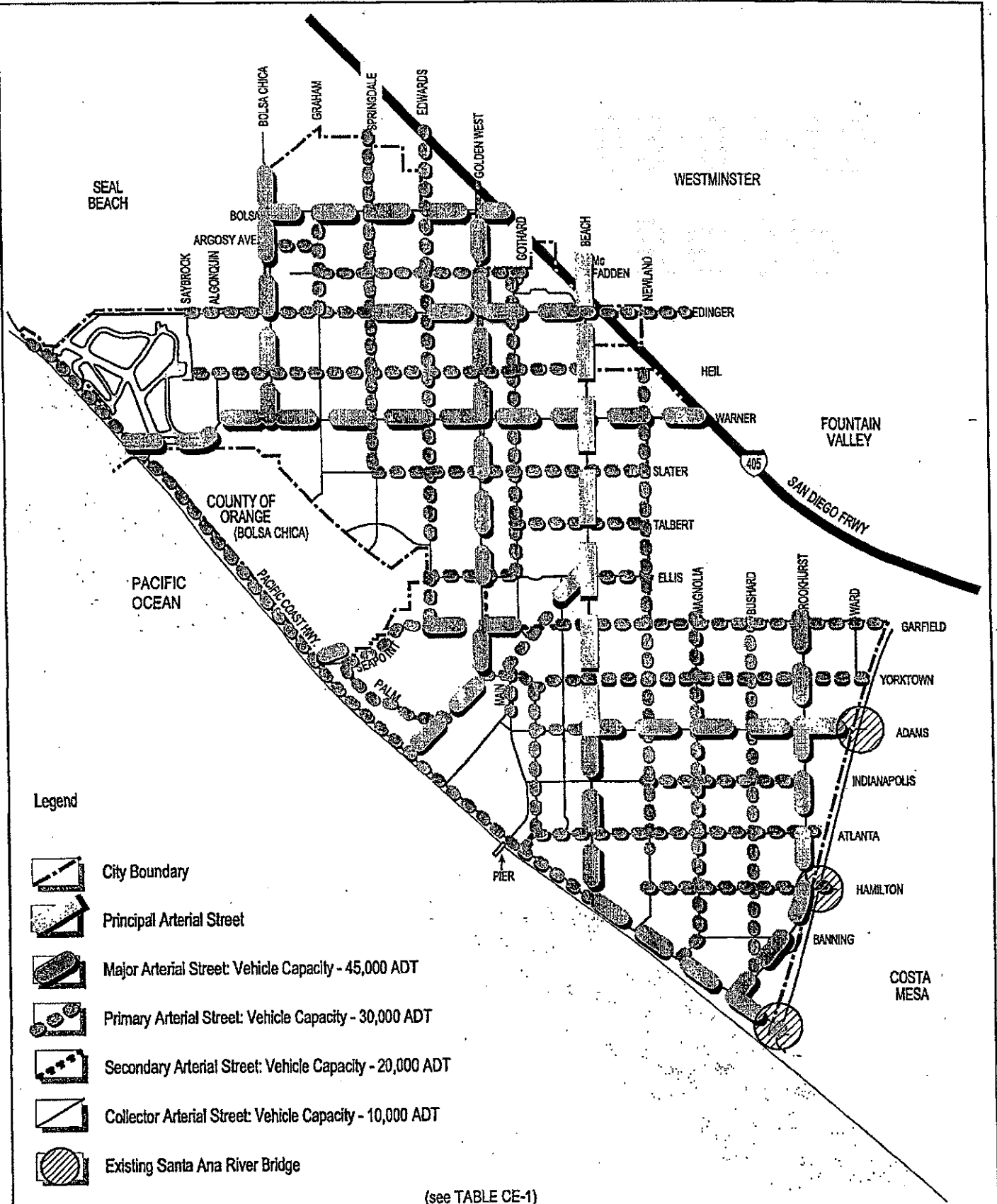
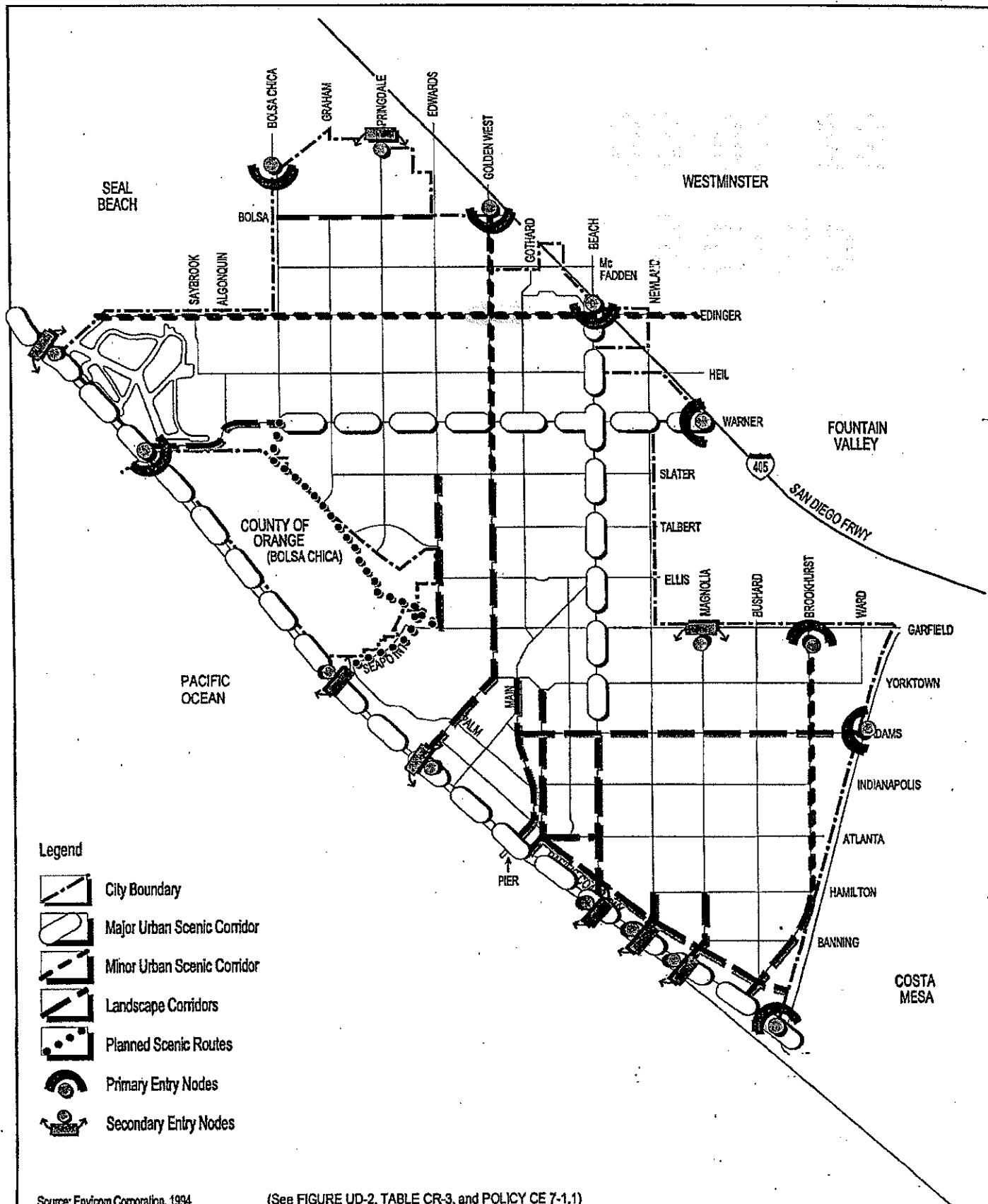


Exhibit "A"





SCENIC HIGHWAYS, SCENIC CORRIDORS, AND LANDSCAPE CORRIDORS

CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH GENERAL PLAN

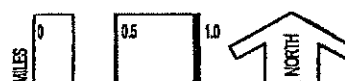
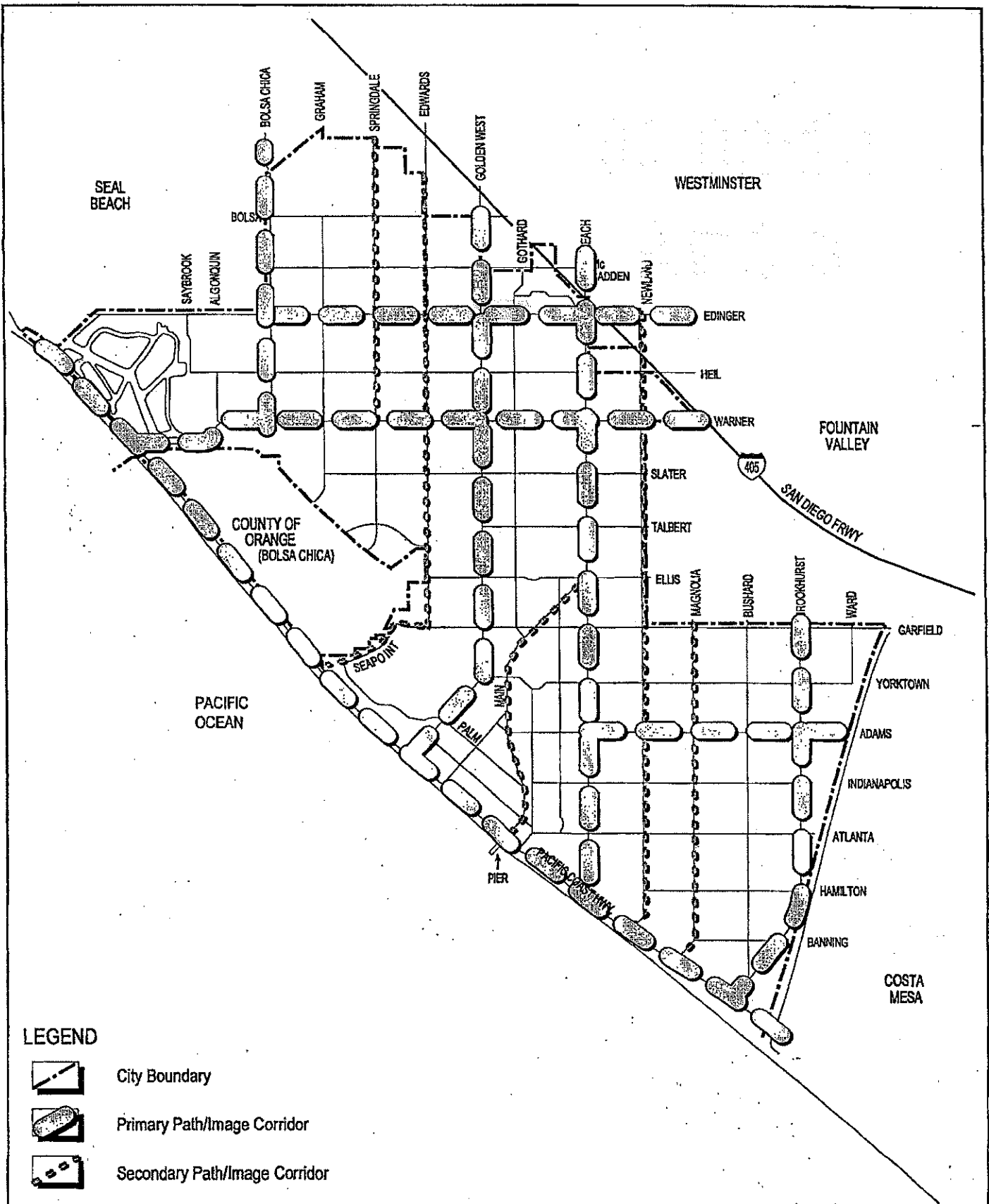
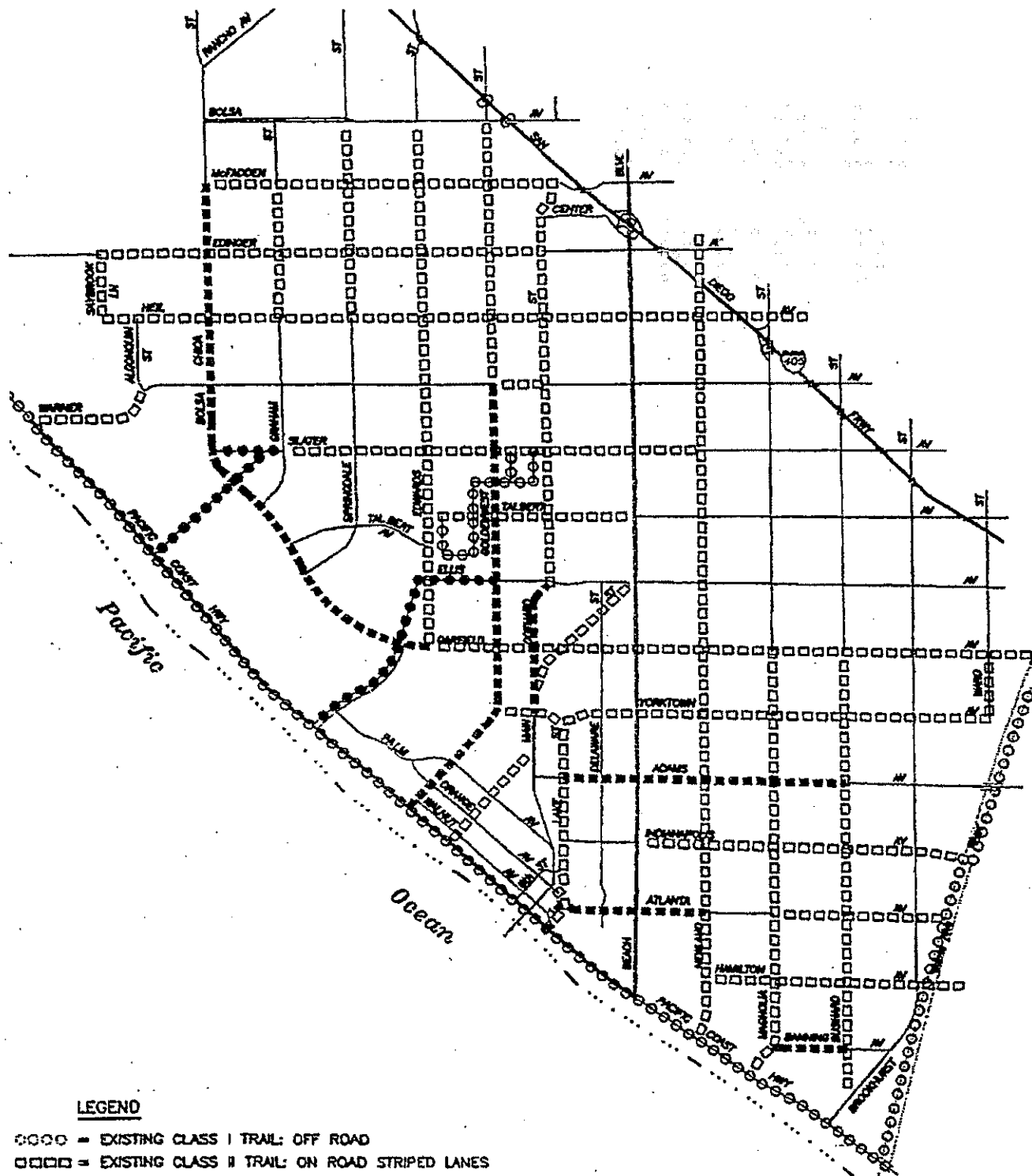


FIGURE CE-12





Source: DKS Associates, 1994

(see CE 6.1.2)

BICYCLE PLAN

CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH GENERAL PLAN

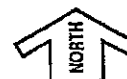


FIGURE CE-9

U 3.3.3

Require that new developments employ the most efficient drainage technology to control drainage and minimize damage to environmentally sensitive areas. (I-U 2, I-U 6, and I-U 5)

U 3.3.4

In areas of known subsidence, require new development to minimize the use of cross gutters and utilize technology such as low flow storm drains. (I-U 2, I-U 6, and I-U 5)

Solid Waste

Goal

U 4

Maintain solid waste collection and disposal services in accordance with the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB939), and pursue funding sources to reduce the cost of the collection and disposal services in the City.

Objective

U 4.1

Ensure an adequate and orderly system for the collection services and the disposal of solid waste to meet the demands of new and existing development in the City.

Policies

U 4.1.1

Maintain adequate solid waste collection for commercial, industrial, and residential developments in accordance with state law. (I-U 11)

U 4.1.2

Investigate the feasibility of providing trash and recycling receptacles along City streets in pedestrian oriented commercial areas (i.e., Downtown, Peter's Landing, Beach Boulevard nodes, etc.); design receptacles to be aesthetically compatible with the district in which they are located. (I-U 3)

Objective

U 4.2

Recycle solid waste to reduce the amount of bulk which must be disposed in area landfill, to conserve energy resources, and to be consistent with the provisions of the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB939).

Policies

U 4.2.1

Monitor SRRE and HHWME programs to ensure proper implementation and achievement of mandated solid waste reduction and diversion goals. (I-U 5 and I-U 12)

U 4.2.2

Revise and replace programs that do not achieve their intended purpose as stated in the SRRE and HHWME. (I-U 5 and I-U 12)

**Gas Supply, Telecommunication,
Electricity**

Goal

U 5

Maintain and expand service provision to City of Huntington Beach residences and businesses.

Objective

5.1

Ensure that adequate natural gas, telecommunication and electrical systems are provided.

Policies

U 5.1.1

Continue to work with service providers to maintain current levels of service and facilitate improved levels of service. (I-U 5)

U 5.1.2

Continue to underground above ground electrical transmission lines. (I-U 6)